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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 DOHA 000358

SENSITIVE

FOR AF/SPG AND NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL SU CD QA UK RS FR CH EUN UN AU  
SUBJECT: DOHA DARFUR TALKS SITREP THREE (E6 MEETING)

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(SBU) KEY POINTS  
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-- E6 (P5 plus EU) Envoys for Sudan met May 27 in Doha with Qatari State Minister Al-Mahmoud and AU/UN Joint Mediator Bassole to review the status of the Doha process on Darfur.

-- During a session open to press, E6 Envoys voiced strong support for, and confidence in, the Doha process. Most Envoys called for expanding engagement in the process to include civil society, noted the close links between Darfur and Sudan's North-South issues, and emphasized the importance of peace in Darfur to wider regional stability.

-- During a closed session, Al-Mahmoud and Bassole were sober about the parties' lack of progress and worried about continued fighting on the ground in Darfur. The UK and Russian Envoys called for closer coordination with other players such as Libya and Egypt, a point not entirely welcomed by Al-Mahmoud.

-- The Envoys' Final Statement has been emailed to S/USSES staff and is accessible online via the Qatar News Agency at:  
[http://www.qnaol.net/QNAEn/Local\\_News/Political\\_S/Pages/TheStatementIssuedbytheMeeting233927052009.aspx](http://www.qnaol.net/QNAEn/Local_News/Political_S/Pages/TheStatementIssuedbytheMeeting233927052009.aspx).

End Key Points.

Open Session

11. (U) Each representative gave an opening statement during a plenary meeting open to the press. Highlights of the statements follow.

Qatar

¶ 2. (U) Qatari Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (and GOQ Sudan lead) Ahmed Al-Mahmoud opened the public session by thanking the E6 representatives for their countries' support of the Doha process. He argued the Darfur solution must be based on a broad national consensus which, inter alia, "underlines both the unity of Sudan and its territorial integrity." Al-Mahmoud called for the implementation of past agreements between the warring parties. He outlined several pillars of the Qatari-AU/UN process: engagement of all parties to the conflict, including civil society; cessation of hostilities; achievement of a just peace with tangible effects on the ground; the need for an unobstructed flow of humanitarian assistance; and reconciliation. Al-Mahmoud concluded by calling for the continued strong support of the international community for the Doha process.

AU/UN  
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¶ 3. (U) AU/UN Joint Chief Mediator Djibrill Bassole lauded the E6 participation which underscores the international community's confidence in the process and determination to coordinate efforts toward peace. He lamented the actions by Chadian rebel groups which have violated the early May Good Will Agreement, and underscored the importance of good Sudan-Chad relations in achieving peace in Darfur. Bassole outlined the impasse between the JEM and GOS on prisoner exchanges and cessation of hostilities, with neither party showing flexibility. He noted that of the main groups, only the SLM remains outside the process and he is hopeful SLM leader Abdulwahid Nur will soon come to the table. Bassole said he will now focus his efforts on a framework agreement and, at minimum, a cessation of hostilities.

China  
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¶ 4. (U) Chinese Envoy Liu Guijin called on all of Darfur's opposition groups to take part in the Doha talks. He emphasized the close linkages between Darfur and North-South peace issues. Guijin noted recent Chinese government donations to a trust fund and other assistance projects to benefit the people of Darfur.

European Union  
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¶ 5. (U) EU Envoy Torben Brylle, while noting the EU was the largest contributor to humanitarian assistance in Darfur, underscored the EU is ready to begin development assistance as peace takes hold. He also called on other parties to join peace talks, including the people of Darfur - so there are more voices than just armed groups and the government. Brylle emphasized the importance of an effective UNAMID deployment which could protect humanitarian support networks.

France  
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¶ 6. (U) French Presidential Advisor Bruno Joubert emphasized the urgent need for progress in Darfur, due to the widespread humanitarian effects of the conflict, the potential for regional instability, and the consequences of failure in Darfur on North-South CPA issues. He said the crisis in Darfur is the origin of the Chad-Sudan tensions, and not a result of those tensions. Joubert called for the Government of Sudan to give a true signal and concrete demonstration of its willingness to negotiate, and stop the illusion of a military solution to problems in Darfur. Likewise, he called for the JEM to accept negotiations open to other rebel movements and populations in Darfur. Joubert concluded that the peace process must include all the key players, including Libya and Egypt, and SLM participation is indispensable.

Russia  
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¶ 7. (U) Russian Envoy Mikhail Margelov cast Russia's interest in Sudan in a wide context, noting that Russia is coming back to the African continent and "raising old ties." However, Moscow is not doing so in a Cold War bipolarity mindset but in order to protect its economic interests and the stability of the continent. While expressing full support for the Qatari initiative and AU/UN

mediation, Margelov also welcomed Libya's efforts. He cast doubt on Sudanese government control over all the rebel groups. Margelov affirmed Russia's readiness to do "full-scale humanitarian assistance" for Darfur, especially where it could be helpful on logistics. Finally, he opined that the ICC indictment of Bashir does not solve problems in Darfur or serve the wider cause of peace.

United Kingdom

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¶8. (U) UK Envoy Michael O'Neill focused on three points of commonality among the Envoys: the need for political will on Darfur; the importance of flexibility in the process; and the need to include other parties, especially civil society. He emphasized that the Doha process is the key, though other efforts should be welcome. O'Neill argued the ICC indictment of Bashir is a symptom, and not a cause, of Sudan's problems, and illustrates the complexity of Sudan issues. He concluded by challenging the E6 to have one strong voice on Darfur - tactical differences are fine but the international community must not let its message get diluted.

Closed Session

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¶9. (U) Following the open session, the representatives held a closed-door discussion of the current status of the process and debated a way forward.

¶10. (SBU) Qatar's Al-Mahmoud noted the collective emphasis on and importance of the SLM's participation in the process, and a Chad-Sudan resolution as a basis for peace. He further noted the very important work of the Special Envoy in getting the JEM to return to the talks. He noted he had recently returned from Sudan and Chad where he delivered messages from the Amir of Qatar on the importance of self-restraint between the two countries and the need for them to actively support the Doha process. Al-Mahmoud reported that both countries' leaders made promises in this regard, though he worried that "one capital" believes it can defeat the rebels and will fight. Al-Mahmoud says he responded that the international community will be against them if they undertake further hostile acts. He noted his continued collaboration with Libya and said he would visit Libya, Chad, and Sudan again soon.

¶11. (SBU) AU/UN Mediator Bassole announced he would inform all the parties, especially JEM, that prisoner issues must not become a tripping point. Likewise, a cessation of hostilities is essential to any progress and unfortunately there is no "good will" evident on the ground, as fighting continues. Bassole noted his efforts to fold-in to the process two other sets of groups: small factions under the JEM umbrella who officially declared their participation in the Doha process; and the "Tripoli groups" who he had encouraged to unite with the others and participate in talks. Bassole said the JEM does not accept these latter groups but it cannot necessarily oppose their participation in the process. Bassole declared his desire to integrate and engage civil society groups, seeing them as complementary to the armed movements. He concluded by calling for the Envoys' support on bettering Chad-Sudan relations.

¶12. (SBU) French Advisor Joubert worried that on Chad-Sudan, the international community is witnessing just the latest iteration of an annual occurrence whereby promises are broken and violence breaks out. With the rainy season approaching in Darfur, it is essential to keep the process moving quickly. Moreover, JEM will be strengthened the more time elapses and therefore less likely to deal.

¶13. (SBU) UK Envoy O'Neill returned to the need for flexibility in the process, calling on Qatar and the AU/UN Mediator to be ready to meet other parties outside of Doha if that would be helpful. He cited Libya and Egypt as two countries worthy of greater inclusion. O'Neill offered that perhaps the international community and the E6 leaders are not as seized with Sudan as they should be, and there is not enough coherence on the main issues.

¶14. (SBU) Picking up on O'Neill's comments on other actors, Al-Mahmoud responded that there are many parties interested in Sudan though it is often for their own interests. He welcomed wider

involvement, but only when it was positive. (Note: a not-so-subtle dig at Egypt and possibly others).

¶15. (SBU) Russian Envoy Margelov agreed with O'Neill that Sudan needs to be elevated as an important issue for each country's leader. He noted a recent G-8 meeting in Rome where the participants decided to encourage elevation of Sudan to the G-8 leaders' summit agenda this summer. Margelov also called for a broader view of Sudan issues, keeping in mind that other neighbors such as Uganda and Kenya have views on North-South CPA issues. He noted that Russia intended to host a conference on Sudan in September to further refine international approaches to these issues.

¶16. (SBU) Al-Mahmoud added that the AU feels south Sudan independence would be disastrous for the African continent, and senior AU officials underscored the seriousness of their concerns several times to him.

¶17. (SBU) In the session's final comment, Chinese Envoy Guijin welcomed SE Gration's statement that he would try to bring SLM leader Nur into the Doha process.

¶18. (U) SE Gration's delegation has cleared this cable.

LEBARON